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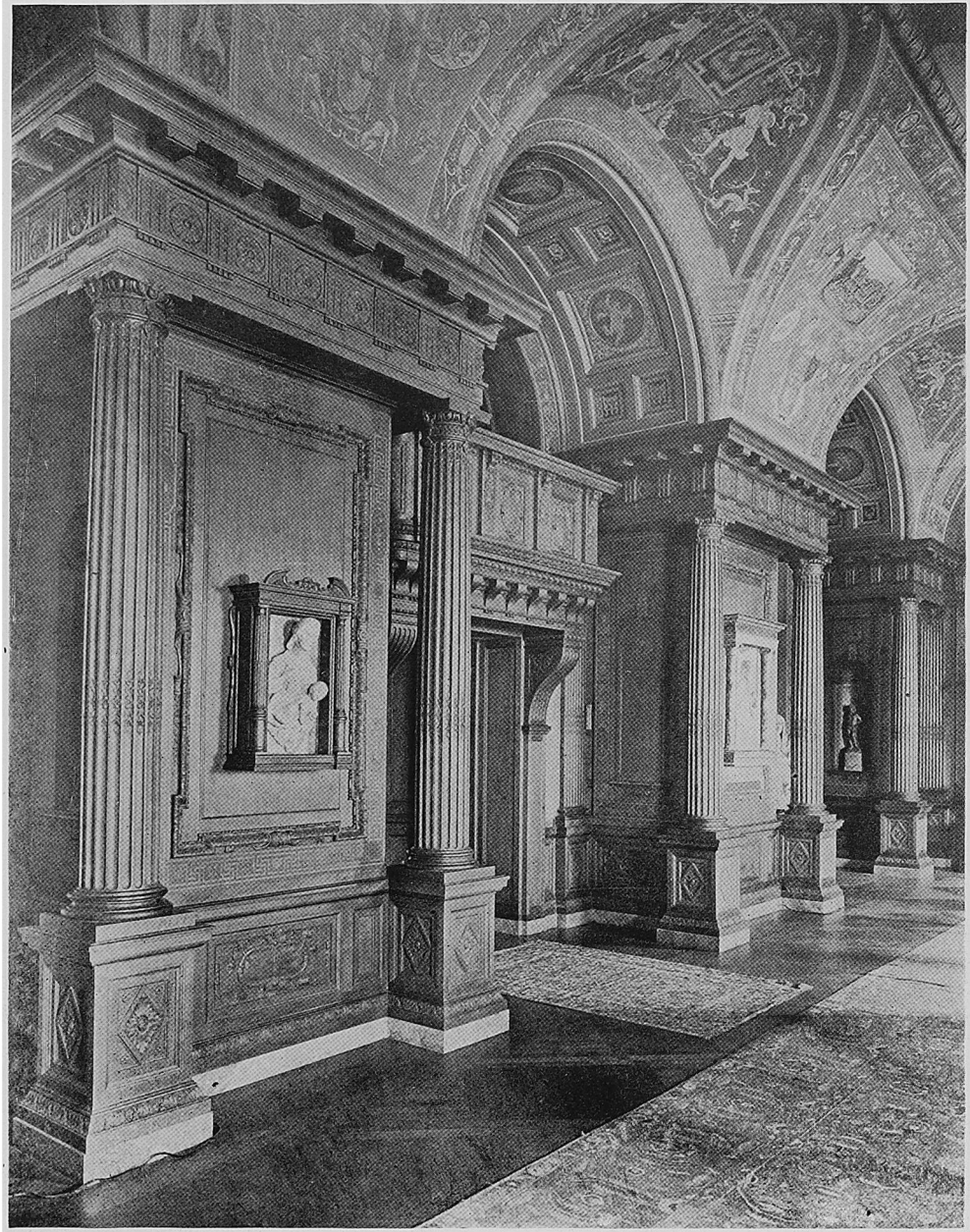
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ART GALLERY IN THE RESIDENCE OF MR. THOMAS F. RYAN, NEW YORK



MADONNA AND CHILD BY ANTONIO ROSSELLINO

The Art Collection of Mr. Thomas F. Ryan

BY MARIE DANFORTH

THE sculpture, paintings and other objects of art in the collection of Mr. Thomas F. Ryan of New York form a notable group in every respect; and a fact to be signalized is that the masterpieces here brought together are, mainly, objects representative of the highest expression of the Italian art of the Fourteenth and of the Fifteenth century, although fine examples of the art other than Italian are also shown.

In the gallery of Mr. Ryan's town house, a long panelled room with vaulted ceiling frescoed in soft polychrome decoration supported by fluted columns, each object is given the setting that its distinction merits. On the dark-toned side walls between the pillars the very important marble reliefs, in which art

objects the collection is especially rich, have place. Here one finds Mino da Fiesole's lovely *Madonna and Child*, originally in the Chapel of the Villa Gonfienti near the Prato. Another relief in the collection, a marble panel by Antonio Rossellino, was formerly in the chapel of the Castle of Bussy d'Amboise, belonging to the Bussy Rabutins. A third relief, also by Rossellino, a *Madonna and Child*, which was formerly in the collection of Madame Louchet, in Lyons, has also been acquired by Mr. Ryan.

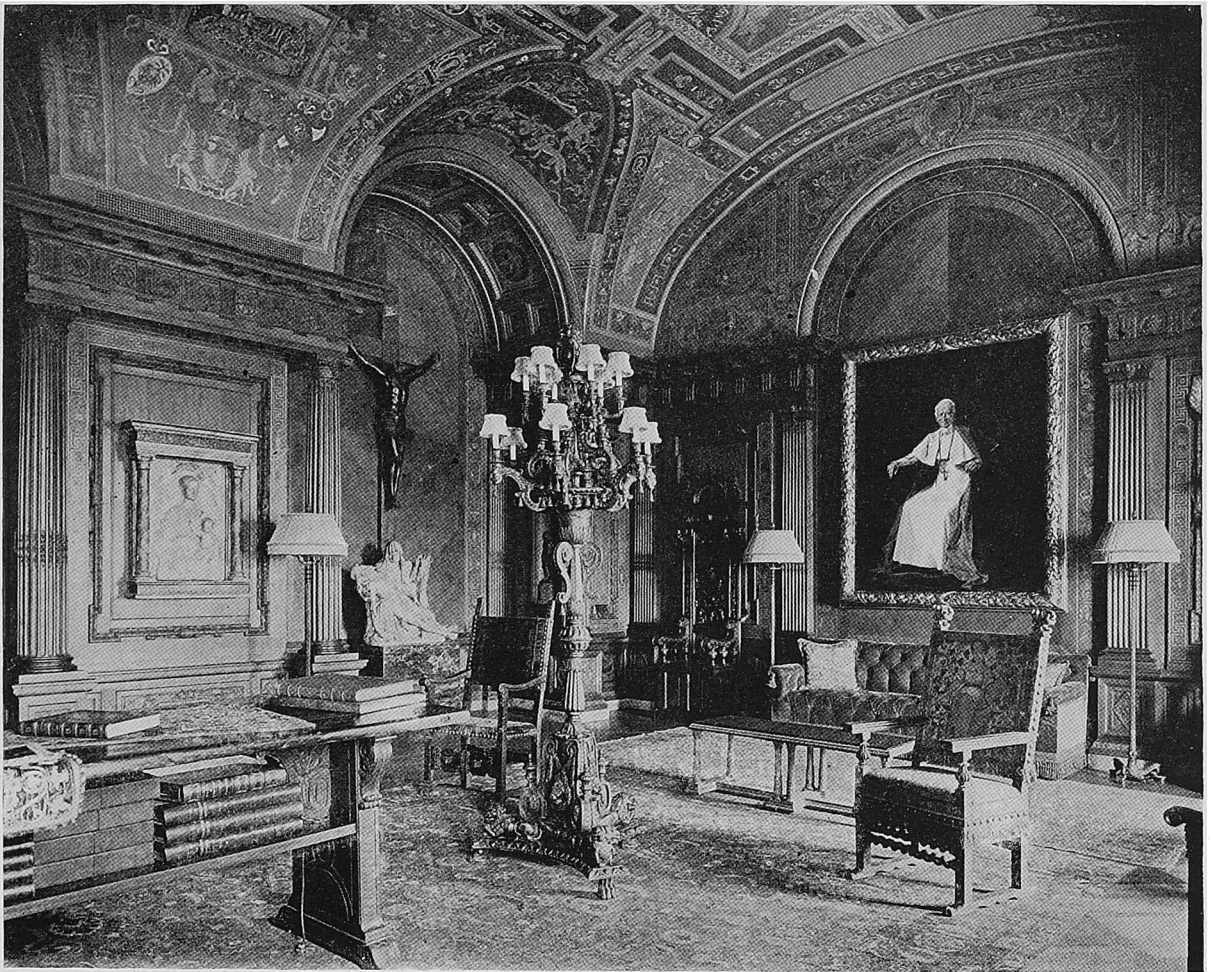
Authoritatively ascribed to Giovanni Dalmata, a fellow worker of Mino's in Rome, about 1475, is a fourth *Madonna and Child* relief. This is placed against a background of gold mosaic. In still another panel is hung a fifth *Madonna and Child*, this by an unknown master.

This relief is not in marble, but is a Renaissance work in *cire perdue*.

A sixth *Madonna and Child* in the Ryan collection is from the hand of Donatello and was formerly in the Aynard collection. A distinguished critic characterizes this unhesitatingly as a work of the master's own hand, extolling the nobility of style and the dignity of conception which distinguish this work.

Among other reliefs are those in terra cotta. One is an example in white glaze attributed to Luca della Robbia. Another, even more interesting, is quite certainly a product of Luca della Robbia's taste with Andrea della Robbia's collaboration, in the sense in which Professor Allan Marquand apportions the authorship (pages 233 and 234 of his *Luca della*

Robbia, Princeton, 1914): "Stemma of the Ginori Family. . . . H., o. 72 M.; W., o. 52 M. This beautiful stemma (coat of arms) was formerly in the Maurice Kann Collection which was sold in 1910, and then in the Sigismond Bardac Collection recently dispersed. The arms, *azure*, a bend, *or*, charged with three 8-pointed estoiles, *azure*, are those of the Ginori family, many of whom held the office of Prior in Florence in the Fifteenth and the early Sixteenth century. The *putto*, who alone supports the arms, is closely related in type to the *Bust of a Boy* in the Museo Nazionale. His eyebrows, lashes, pupils and iris boundaries are marked in violet, no color being used for the irises themselves. The heavy scroll with its seeded terminals suggests



ALCOVE IN THE ART GALLERY OF MR. THOMAS F. RYAN. HERE A XVTH CENTURY ITALIAN BRONZE CRUCIFIX OF THE SCHOOL OF GIOVANNI DI BOLOGNA IS PLACED, BENEATH WHICH IS A PIETA IN MARBLE, A FRENCH WORK IN THE STYLE OF MICHEL COLOMBE (END OF THE FIFTEENTH AND BEGINNING OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY)



NORTH END OF THE ART GALLERY IN THE RESIDENCE OF MR. THOMAS F. RYAN. A SIXTEENTH CENTURY FLEMISH TAPESTRY HANGS OVER THE MANTEL-SHELF AND TO THE RIGHT IS THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY FRENCH STAINED GLASS WINDOW BY VALENTIN BOUCH

the ornament on the consoles of the Cantoria, and the imitation of porphyry which forms the background recalls the stemma of Jacopo dei Pazzi in the Palazzo Serristori and the decoration of the vault of the porch of the Pazzi Chapel. This relief may well have been made under the eye of Luca himself, and in accordance with his design, but the softened forms suggest the handiwork of his nephew Andrea."

The *Pietà* in high relief, enamelled in colors, ascribed to Giovanni della Robbia, is another notable work in the collection. An *Infant Christ* by Matteo Civitali (1435-1501), the master of Lucca (where most of his best works are still to be seen), and a statuette by Desidero di Settignano (1428-1464) from the Laffan collection, showing a figure of the Infant

Christ, holding an orb in the right hand, the left hand raised in the act of benediction, enrich the collection. The latter work is Desidero's without doubt, although works by Settignano have frequently been attributed to Donatello.

An alcove at the end of the east wall of the gallery contains a remarkably fine Sixteenth century stained glass window from the Abbey Church of the Flavigny in Lorraine. The letters "FIL" in the bottom panel indicate sufficiently the words *Fraus inimica luci* (Fraud is the enemy of light), the motto of Warry de Lucy, twenty-first Prior of Flivigny (1510-1557). The author of this stained glass window was the celebrated Valentin Bouch, and it would be impossible to find an example of his work more satisfactorily authenticated than this, as the treasures



STAIRWAY HALL IN THE RESIDENCE OF MR. THOMAS F. RYAN



"RUNNING." MARBLE FIGURE, EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.
COLLECTION OF MR. THOMAS F. RYAN

of this Abbey Church have been well known and inventoried.

At the end of the gallery, above the mantel hangs a remarkable Gothic Flemish tapestry, bearing the representation of a *Pietà*, a work of exceptional beauty. This, from a cartoon by Maitre Phillipe, is a high loom (*haute-lisse*), woven with colored worsteds, gold, silver and silken threads in flax warp: a truly superb tapestry which must be classed among the finest examples of textile art produced at Brussels during the latter part of the Fifteenth century and the first part of the Sixteenth. Its design is carried out with religious feeling and charm in characteristic simplicity of arrangement. The heads have great distinction, the hands are carefully modelled. The magnificence of costumes and the finely preserved coloring of this example make it a masterpiece of exceptional interest. At the other end of the gallery hangs a Sixteenth century French tapestry—one of a series of eight known as the Gommault-Macée tapestries.

Two Neapolitan marble busts ranking

among highly important Quattrocento portrait sculptures, also have their place in the collection. One, by Francesco Laurana is generally believed to represent Beatrice of Aragon, daughter of King Ferdinand of Naples, who married King Matthias of Hungary in 1476. The second Fifteenth century Neapolitan marble, *Portrait Bust of a Man*, is, perhaps, by Pietro da Milano, although its attribution has been a matter of doubt in the past and may still be the subject of interesting study because it is such a masterpiece of unflinching characterization.

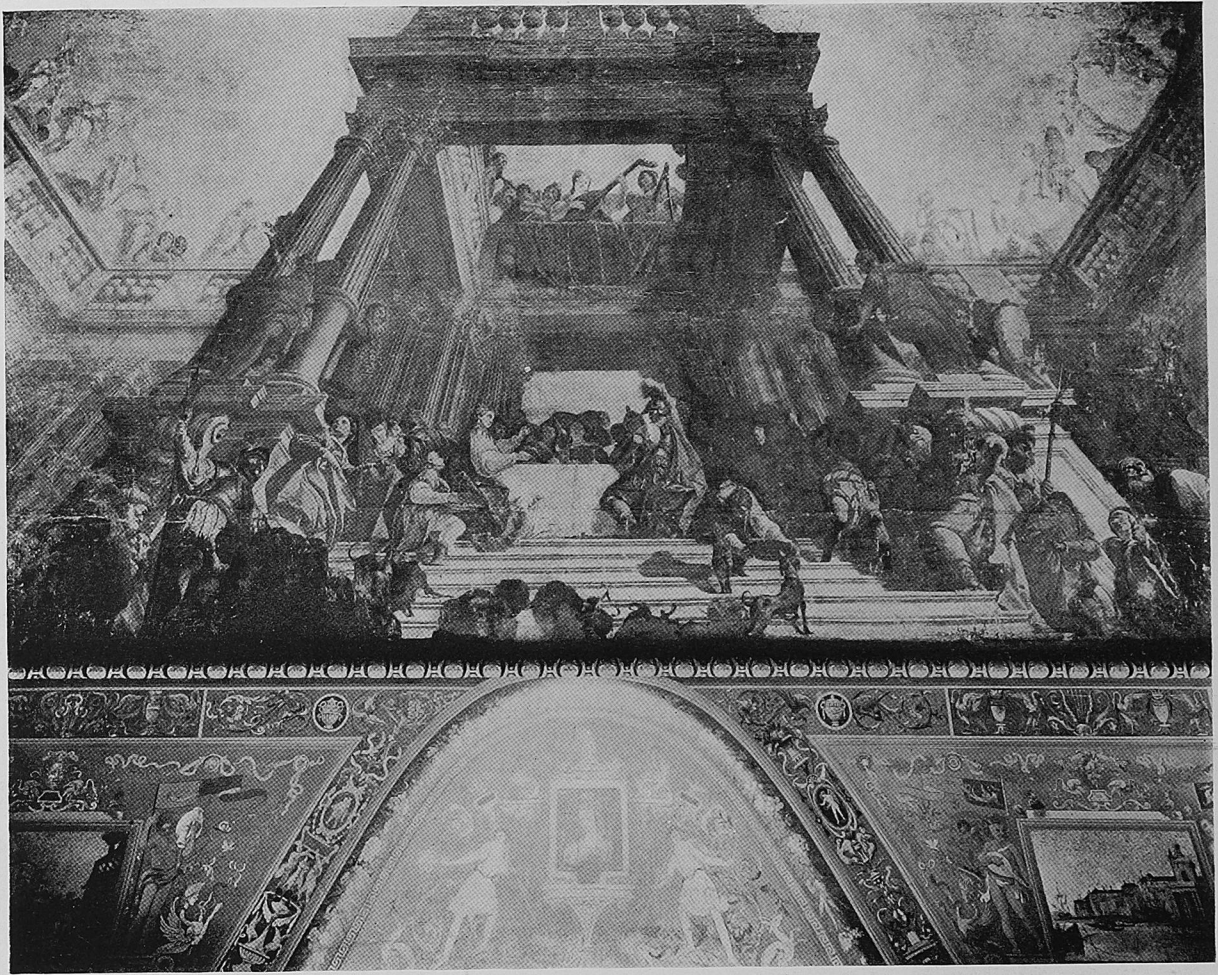
Another marble of interest is by Amadeo (1446-1519). This is of great delicacy and finish and shows two angels in the attitude of homage and prayer. Amadeo became head architect of the Certosa in 1481, and about this time made a new design for the facade of the Cathedral. Among the figures thereon are two angels which closely resemble these. A Fifteenth or early Sixteenth century French *Pietà* of the Michel Colombe school, executed in soft marble, comes from the environs of Nimes and



MARBLE GROUP, EIGHTEENTH CENTURY. COLLECTION OF MR. THOMAS F. RYAN



MADONNA AND CHILD BY ANTONIO ROSSELINO. COLLECTION OF MR. THOMAS F. RYAN

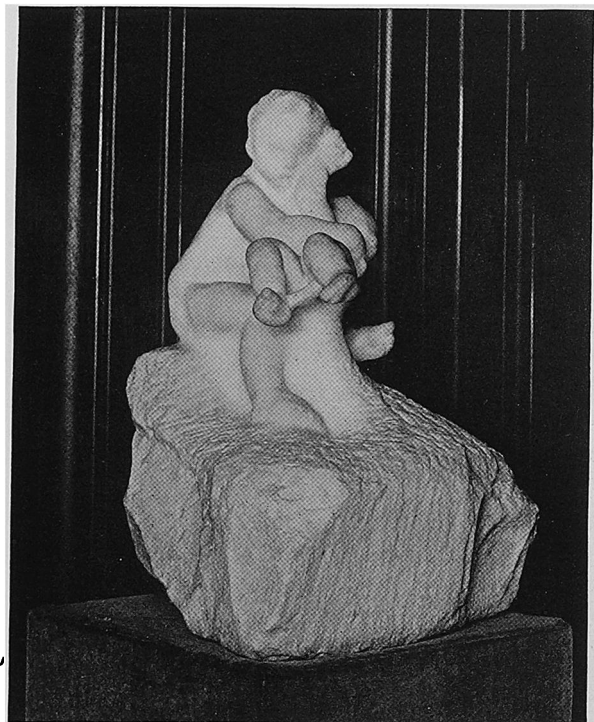


POLYCHROME CEILING IN THE ART GALLERY OF THE RESIDENCE OF MR. THOMAS F. RYAN

resembles very much the noted Biron monument in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. A limestone figurine of Saint Matthew, French, Fourteenth century, and one of Saint Sebastian, attributed to Rossellino, further contribute to the interest of this valuable collection of religious art. One of the most treasured later marbles in the Ryan collection is a Child's Head by Houdon, while Mr. Ryan's examples of Rodin's sculpture, exceeding in number those in other private collections in America, denote his appreciation of that great French master. Further evidence of that appreciation is recorded in *The Collection of Sculptures by Auguste Rodin* (New York, 1913), in which monograph Mr. Joseph Breck writes: "In the spring of 1910, Mr. Thomas Fortune Ryan gave

to the Museum twenty-five thousand dollars for the purchase of sculptures by Auguste Rodin, with the purpose primarily of enabling students of sculpture in this country to study at first hand a representative collection of original works by this greatest of modern masters. The selection of the works to be acquired was left to the Director, Mr. Edward Robinson, and to Mr. Daniel C. French, Chairman of the Museum's Committee on Sculpture; and in the summer of 1910, with the assistance of the sculptor, a choice was made at Rodin's studios in Paris and Meudon."

Mr. Ryan's collection of Limoges enamels is remarkably fine and contains many examples of great rarity. These, together with Thirteenth century champ-levé enamels of great interest, fill the



CHILDHOOD. BY AUGUSTE RODIN

cabinets about the gallery. In this group is the eucharistic *colombe* from the collection of Count Chandon de Brailles, one of the finest enamel pieces extant. Then there are other remarkable enamels, reliquaries, chalices and plaques, such as the large rectangular early Sixteenth century Limoges plaque, a work by Nardon Penicaud, representing Our Lord's *Entry into Jerusalem*. This famous piece was once a chief treasure in the Sigismond Bardac collection. There is also a fine triptych by Nardon Penicaud in the Ryan collection, one which was exhibited in the Exposition Retrospective at Paris in 1900. Jean Penicaud the First is represented in the Ryan collection by a plaque with a composition of eight figures. Still another plaque by this same artist represents the twelve scenes of the Passion, after twelve engravings by Martin Schongauer (1450-1491). This piece was formerly in the Mannheim collection. From the Spitzer collection was acquired the Thirteenth century champlévé *chasse*, modelled in the form of a house with a transept, on four square feet, surmounted by a crest

in openwork, ornamented with balls of rock crystal. The whole *chasse* is enveloped with a covering of engraved and gilded brass in which cabochons of mediæval colored glass are set. A Thirteenth century champlévé reliquary, quadrilateral in form, bears in the design of the front a representation of the murder of St. Thomas à Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, with his entombment shown on the gable above, the three figures in each scene being engraved and of gilt copper, with the heads in relief.

Mr. Ryan's Chinese enamels are also important examples of oriental cloisonné, and the oriental bronzes, such as the Chinese Temple Wine Cistern of the Chou Dynasty (B. C. 1122-255), the Greek and Etruscan bronzes (such as those pieces formerly in the Castellani Collection) discovered near Perugia (the *Hypnos* now in the British Museum was from the same find), are additional treasures which enhance the truly remarkable gathering of authentic art masterpieces in Mr. Ryan's home.

Mr. Ryan's collection of early Italian faience includes an important large Caffaggiolo vase of the Sixteenth century, and one of Faenza dating from about 1536. Both of these pieces were formerly in the Wencke collection. An Urbino *piatta*, a Gubbio lusted cup by Master Giorgio, signed and dated 1530, and a Castel Durante *piatta* decorated with the coat of arms of the Gonzaga and the Este, by the celebrated Niccolo da Urbino, are also to be found with these Maiolica treasures.

Two seventeenth century Spanish altar bronzes by Alonzo Cano in the gallery should be mentioned as works of rare distinction. These bronzes, which originally belonged to the same altar, represent Santa Teresa of Avila and San Pedro of Alcantara. An important and exceptionally fine Italian bronze Crucifixion of the school of Giovanni de Bologna, exhibited in Venice at the Esposizione d'Arte Sacra in 1908, is shown in a niche, above *Pietà*, which has been mentioned. This is, of course, but a hint of the interest, extent and art value of the collection.